Hepatitis A Virus (HAV) Fact Sheet (adapted from materials developed by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention) Report to Iowa Dept. Acute HAV infection (positive anti-HAV IgM) of Public Health Etiology HAV is an RNA virus in the picornavirus group. Signs and Symptoms May be asymptomatic Older persons are more likely to have symptoms. Symptoms usually occur abruptly and may include fever, tiredness, loss of appetite, nausea, abdominal discomfort, dark urine, Symptoms generally last less than 2 months; occasionally, prolonged or relapsing illness can last up to 6 months. Average incubation period is 28 days (range: 15-50 days) **Long-Term Effects** Chronic infection does not occur. HAV infection confers life-long immunity. 15% of HAV-infected persons will have prolonged or relapsing symptoms over a 6-month period. **Transmission** Fecal-oral transmission by: person-to-person contact or ingestion of contaminated food or water Communicability 14 days before to 7 days after onset of symptoms **Risk Groups** Household contacts of infected persons Sexual contacts of infected persons Persons, especially children, living in regions of the United States with high rates of HAV infection Travelers to regions where HAV is common, including Central and South America, Africa, and Asia Men who have sex with men Injection and non-injection drug users **Prevention** HAV vaccine is the best protection. Immune globulin (IG) provides short-term protection against HAV. IG is appropriate for both pre- and post-exposure prophylaxis; post-exposure prophylaxis can be given within 14 days after exposure to HAV. Hand washing with soap and water after using the bathroom or changing diapers and before preparing or eating food. Vaccine HAV vaccine is recommended for: Recommendations* travelers to areas with increased rates of HAV infection men who have sex with men injection and non-injection drug users persons with chronic liver disease persons with clotting-factor disorders (e.g., hemophilia) children living in regions of the U.S. with high rates of HAV infection anyone who wants to be protected from contracting HAV *HAV vaccine is licensed only for persons 2 years of age or older **Medical Management** Supportive care **Postexposure** IG for contacts of cases within 14 days of exposure. Contacts determined case-by-case, Management based on potential for transmission. **Trends & Statistics** Occurs in epidemics nationally and locally During epidemic years, the number of HAV cases reported in the U.S. has reached Since the HAV vaccine was licensed in 1995, vaccine use has increased in the U.S. and morbidity has reached historic lows. One-third of persons in the U.S. are immune to HAV (i.e., have evidence of past infection). Approximately one-third of reported cases occur among children less than 15 years of age.

HAV incidence rates